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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5867
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RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7089
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 7941
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 002832

SENSITIVE
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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS, DRL

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [IN](#)
SUBJECT: DELHI DIARY, OCTOBER 24-31, 2008

REF: A. NEW DELHI 02772
[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 00515

[1](#)1. (U) Below is a compilation of political highlights from Embassy New Delhi for October 24-31, 2008, that did not feature in our other reporting, including:

- Parliament Will Reconvene December 10
- Political Storm Brewing After Migrant Lynching
- Mayawati Faces Off with Gandhis

Parliament Will Reconvene December 10

[1](#)2. (U) As expected, the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government adjourned Parliament on October 24 and will reconvene on December 14 (Ref. A). The current session began on July 21 and has been extended twice: after the confidence motion on July 22 and the latest adjournment on October 24. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vayalar Ravi told local press that the UPA decided to suspend Parliament in response to "opposition demands to cut the session short" in view of the festival season and upcoming assembly elections in six states.

[1](#)3. (U) The decision has invited heated attacks FROM opposition Left parties and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Communist Party of India Marxist (CPI-M) MP Sitram Yechurty alleged that the move is driven by the notion that two trust votes cannot be held in the same session, noting that "the Government is worried about a no-confidence motion coming." Main opposition party BJP called for a "fresh and full-fledged" winter session and accused the UPA of "blatantly flouting" parliamentary rules and procedures.

POLITICAL STORM BREWING AFTER MIGRANT LYNCHING

[1](#)4. (U) Crucial allies of India's UPA coalition government condemned the lynching of an Uttar Pradesh (UP) migrant laborer in Mumbai on October 28. Union Railways Minister Lalu Prasad of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) threatened to cancel trains to the state. Following the lead of opposition Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Chief Mayawati, UPA ally Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) official and Union Minister Ram Vilas

Paswan demanded the dismissal of the Congress-led government in Maharashtra and called for President's rule.

15. (U) Dharamdev Ramnarain Rai, a 25-year-old migrant laborer from UP, was lynched on a suburban train by a gang of Mumbai youths. Railway police have registered a complaint against unknown assailants, but have not arrested anyone as yet. One day before, Mumbai police killed Rahul Raj, a youth from Bihar who was taking hostages, on a public transport bus (Ref. B).

16. (U) Tuesday's incident has prompted a Union Home Ministry investigation into the circumstances leading to Rai's death and to review the security situation of non-Maharashtrians in the state. Reacting sharply to attacks, Lalu Prasad told local reporters that "Tough action is needed...The people of North India are worried." Samajwadi Party (SP) General Secretary Amar Singh further criticized the state government's failure to control "communal violence." He alleged that Shiv Sena Supremo Bal Thackeray and his nephew Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) leader Raj Thackeray were trying to break up the country.

17. (SBU) COMMENT: A new political storm is brewing in New Delhi and Mumbai over the inadequate government response to the targeted attacks on North Indian laborers. Much of the criticism is directed at the Congress-led state government. The UPA has also been heavily criticized for the delayed response in condemning the violent attacks. The incidents have provided an opportunity for some. Former Chief Minister

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of Bihar and current Indian Railways Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav has strengthened his appeal by slamming the state government. Ahead of hotly contested state assembly elections in November-December and national elections due by May 2009, the fumbled government response to communal violence may become an important elections issue.

MAYAWATI FACES OFF WITH GANDHI

18. (U) Congress General Secretary Rahul Gandhi's student outreach event in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh (UP) was cancelled at the 11th hour in a move that senior party leaders attributed to UP Chief Minister Mayawati's Government. During a day-long visit to UP on October 24, Gandhi was to meet with students at the Chandra Shekhar Azad Agriculture University. However, University officials cancelled the event minutes before Gandhi's arrival "on the instruction of state government security."

19. (SBU) Just one week ago, UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi faced off with CM Mayawati after Sonia was prevented from holding a Congress Party rally in her parliamentary constituency of Rae Bareilly. Refuting allegations of "political payback," the UP state government denied involvement in the University event. In the run-up to contest elections, squabbles between the influential CM Mayawati and the Gandhi family are to be expected.

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